

Charley was a wonderful person to work with, always willing to lend a hand, listen when you needed to talk to someone, and helped customers above and beyond the requirements of his job. Charley retired from Farmers 3 years ago, and looked forward to being able to spend more time with his wife Maggie and daughter Stevie. Sadly, Charley passed away last weekend at the age of 65. I urge all members of this House to join me in mourning the passing of Charley Schneider and extending our condolences to the family and friends who greatly loved him.

TRIBUTE TO THE MOUNTAIN
LODGE NO. 281, F.&A.M. AND THE
JUNIATA LODGE NO. 282, F.&A.M.

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mountain Lodge No. 281, F.&A.M. and the Juniata Lodge No. 282, F.&A.M. on their 150th Anniversary and to thank them for their service and dedication to their community.

From its home town of Edinburgh, England, the Honorable Fraternity of Freemasonry came to Pennsylvania in 1730 on a mission to spread the Masonic vision of a "Brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God." Out of this need for brotherhood, the Mountain Lodge and Juniata Lodge were founded on December 8, 1853. Since that date these two lodges have consistently exhibited the qualities to which they are committed, sharing with their community a moral code based upon honesty, strength of character, and the highest standard of ethics.

The Freemasons lead their communities by the example that they set in their own lives as they work to uphold the very pillars of the American society. Each Freemason is taught to be true, the crucial attribute that provides the basis for all virtues of man, and to maintain a devotion to spirituality and intellectual growth. Additionally, they bear a strong commitment to artistic and cultural excellence. While cultivating all of the above characteristics, a freemason's family values remain strong and devoted. These organizations have not only enriched the lives of their members, but of those in the surrounding communities who have undoubtedly benefitted from the charity, education and service that they have repeatedly provided.

This nation was built by a group of men, bound by brotherhood under the direction of God, who believed in the natural rights of freedom and democracy. The members of these Masonic lodges have worked daily for 150 years to preserve that "Brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God," and the standard of excellence upon which it was founded. The growing and active memberships of these organizations are a symbol of the community's devotion to success and the promise that is to come. As a proud member of the Juniata Lodge, I congratulate these two Masonic lodges on their 150th Anniversary and thank them for all their hard work and service.

NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS
MONTH

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, as you may know, November is National Family Caregivers Month, and I rise today to celebrate and honor our nation's caregivers. Nationwide, more than 25 million caregivers annually provide over \$200 billion in unpaid care to their loved ones with disabling and chronic conditions. More importantly, this voluntary care allows seniors and others to continue living at home, which improves their spirits and often speeds up recovery.

Family caregiving comes in many forms—from the mother raising a child with developmental disabilities and fighting for her child's right to an education, to the wife caring for her husband with Alzheimer's Disease and enduring that anguish. There are as many unique situations as there are family caregivers. But, what these caregivers all have in common is their compassion, their dedication and their selflessness. Family caregiving contributes to family stability, and it often spares families from more costly, out-of-home placements. These people are the quiet heroes of our nation. However, too often, they are also silent sufferers.

Most caregivers freely and willingly provide this care out of love and commitment, but often at great cost to themselves physically, emotionally, and financially. Studies show that many caregivers stretch themselves so thin that they jeopardize their own health and ability to provide continued care to their dependent loved ones.

In my home state of Rhode Island, Tracey Laranjo is the mother of ten-year-old Tyler. Tyler is bipolar and suffers from Severe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and certain developmental disabilities. Tyler is also an important member of the Laranjo family—the gifts and the love he brings to his parents and older brother are not really different than any other ten year old. Tyler is a lucky child, with parents who have fought long and hard to get him the mental health services that he needs, while educating themselves about how to take care of their son. But not surprisingly, sometimes Tracey is exhausted. After a long wait, she was fortunate enough to recently access respite care services in Rhode Island and can now take an occasional break, knowing that her son is being properly cared for. She refers to these respite hours, 110 hours per year, as "gold"—saving them for times she knows she needs them, and grateful for every minute. These hours give Tracey time to recoup without feeling guilty, and let her reflect on the special child she has been blessed with.

Just a few hours of respite can go a long way in keeping a family together, keeping a child at home, and turning a situation where a vulnerable person was at risk of abuse into one where that same person feels loved, respected and valued. No family should ever be denied this kind of assistance.

However, the vast majority of family caregivers does not have access to respite, cannot afford it, cannot find qualified, trained respite services or providers, or do not qualify for ex-

isting respite benefits because they are not Medicaid eligible or do not meet the limited eligibility requirements of other narrowly-targeted state or federal programs. As we celebrate National Family Caregivers Month, we must remember that for a person providing intense and exhausting care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, an occasional short break can literally be a lifesaver.

In keeping with the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision requiring states to ensure that individuals with disabilities and chronic conditions are able to live and work in the least restrictive environment, respite provides the support caregivers need to avoid or delay institutional placements.

We can recognize and honor the nation's caregivers by passing the Lifespan Respite Care Act of 2003, which I introduced this spring. H.R. 1083 would authorize competitive grants to states and other eligible entities to make respite available and accessible to family caregivers, regardless of age or disability. This legislation would help states maximize use of existing resources and leverage new dollars by building on current services and systems that states already have in place. The bill would support planned and emergency respite, respite worker training and recruitment, caregiver training, and program evaluation.

The Senate has already passed the Lifespan Respite Care Act of 2003. I urge my colleagues to join the 85 bipartisan cosponsors of the House bill and ask that the House take immediate action to pass it in time to honor the nation's caregivers in celebration of National Family Caregivers Month.

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY, YOU'VE
GOT A FRIEND (OR 246) IN CON-
GRESS

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, today is a sad day in the history of Congress. Today one industry has hijacked a political party and that party has bulldozed a poor energy policy through this body.

The U.S. Congress is often held up and revered as the model of Democracy. Yet this bill has been bad news for Americans—and our form of government—from the start. First, the Administration, led by Vice President CHENEY, held secret meetings with energy industry insiders to determine what they wanted from an energy policy—what the energy industry wants should not be confused with what the nation needed from an energy policy. Next, after a heavy-handed process, a bill, H.R. 6, was passed in this body. The bill then moved into conference, at which point, the two Republican co-chairs decided that they would write the nation's energy policy by themselves with no input from Democrats, but with plenty of input from lobbyists looking out for their oil, gas and other energy industry clients. The energy bill went from bad to worse as, at the last minute, many sweetheart deals were added that had never been passed by either body. Never before has the energy industry had such a friend in the White House and such great friends in the Congress—we know now that GOP does indeed mean "Gas, Oil, and Petroleum".